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Expanded Recommendations Include Vaccinating Children Against Influenza

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) now recommend, unless contraindicated, that all infants and children 6-23 months of age be immunized against influenza. Previously, the ACIP and AAP only encouraged vaccination against influenza in this age group. Epidemiologic studies indicate that healthy children younger than 24 months of age, as well as those with conditions placing them at increased risk, are hospitalized for influenza and its complications at high rates similar to the elderly. The vaccine is contraindicated for infants less than 6 months of age.

As for all children less than 9 years of age, 2 shots of vaccine should be given at least one month apart if the child is receiving the influenza vaccine for the first time. When feasible, the second dose should be given before December.

Influenza vaccine is covered by the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program for all infants and children ages 6-23 months of age and for children 2-18 years of age who have the following risk factors:

Children and adolescents aged 6 months through 18 years with chronic disorders of the pulmonary or cardiovascular system, asthma, and those receiving long-term aspirin therapy, those who have required regular medical follow-up or hospitalization during the preceding year because of chronic metabolic disease, renal dysfunction, hemoglobinopathies, or immunosuppression.

Children and adolescents aged 2 years through 18 years who are household contacts of persons in high-risk groups (e.g., persons

aged 65 years or older, transplant recipients, person with AIDS, and children aged less than 2 years). **Children and adolescents** aged 6 months through 18 years who are residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities that house persons at any age who have chronic medical conditions. **Females** under 19 years of age who will be pregnant during influenza season.

Household contacts and out-of-home caretakers of infants 0-23 months of age should also be immunized to protect these infants and young children. On a reciprocal basis, immunization of these infants and young children may serve to protect elderly, immunosuppressed, and other susceptible household members.

While limited supplies of thimerosal-free influenza vaccine are available, trivalent vaccine containing thimerosal is also considered safe and protective in this young age group. VFC providers can begin ordering influenza vaccine for their eligible patients beginning October 4, 2004. **SAMHD's preservative free flu vaccine shipment is anticipated to arrive mid to late October and providers will receive updates when the vaccine becomes available.** For dosing information see the following chart and refer to the package insert.

Age	Dosage	Formulation ^a	Number of Doses
6 – 35 mos.	.25 mL	Preservative-free	1 or 2 ^b
3 – 8 years	.50 mL	10 dose vials	1 or 2 ^b
9 years +	.50 mL	10 dose vials	1

Flu Season 2004-2005

As Flu season approaches the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) clinics will begin providing flu shots on Monday, October 18th. The SAMHD will provide opportunities for adults, for whom the flu vaccine is routinely recommended, infants and children, 6 months of age and older as previously indicated, to receive the shot at various clinics throughout the flu season.

The cost of receiving a flu shot is \$20, for those with Medicare, Medicaid, CareLink, Community First, and CHIP there will not be a charge for the flu shot (with current enrollment card). For individuals with Medicare and Medicaid (with a prescription) there will be no charge for their pneumonia shot (with current enrollment card), for others the cost of the pneumonia shot will be \$25. Below is a list of scheduled health fairs where flu and pneumococcal shots will be offered.

Edgewood Fine Arts Academy - 607 SW 34th Street
Sat., Sept. 25th, 9am – 2pm

Guadalupe Community Center - 1801 W. Durango
Wed., Sept. 29th, 10am – 2pm

San Fernando Health & Safety Fair - 115 Main Plaza
Sat., Oct. 2nd 8am – 1pm

Frank Garrett Community Center - 1226 NW 18th Street
Wed. Oct., 6th 9am – 2pm

American Heart Association's Festival Hispano de la Salud
Alamodome, Sun., Oct. 24th 12pm – 4pm

Latina Health Conference - 1300 San Pedro

S.A. College Gymnasium, Sat., Oct. 30th 9am – 2pm

For more information on any of these locations, please call 207-8790 or log on to www.sanantonio.gov

/health.

Childhood Rates at Record High Levels

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services announced on July 29, 2004 that the nation's childhood immunization rates are at record high levels, including significant increases in rates of immunization for chickenpox and pneumococcal pneumonia, the two most recent additions to the childhood immunization schedule.

National coverage with chickenpox vaccine increased from 80.6 percent in 2002 to 84.8 percent in 2003. Coverage for three or more doses of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine increased from 40.9 percent in 2002 to 68.1 percent in 2003. Coverage for four or more doses of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, reported for the first time this year, was 36.7 percent. Coverage for all other childhood vaccines and series, increased significantly in 2003 compared with 2002.

The findings were reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at a news conference sponsored by The National Partnership for Immunization (NPI) to kick off August as National Immunization Awareness Month. "We need to thank everyone who has helped put childhood vaccination rates at an all-time high -- and then we all need to get back to work and help make this rate go even higher," HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson said. "Childhood vaccination is a key element of equal opportunity for Americans, and we need to reach all children and protect them."

The National Immunization Survey (NIS) provides estimates of vaccination coverage among children ages 19-35 months for each of the 50 states and 28 selected urban areas. CDC uses a quarterly random-digit-dialing sample of telephone numbers for each of the 78 survey areas to collect vaccination data for all age-eligible children. In 2003, vaccination data were obtained for 21,210 children.

In 2003, coverage for the 4:3:1:3:3 series, which includes four doses of Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis, (DTaP), three doses of polio vaccine, one dose of measles-containing vaccine, three doses of Hib vaccine, and three doses of hepatitis B vaccine, increased to 79.4 percent, compared to 74.8 percent in 2002 and 73.7 percent in 2001 and 72.9 percent in 2000.

In 2003, as in previous years, urban areas reported lower immunization rates than states mostly due to large concentrations of lower socio-economically displaced persons. Among the 28 urban areas, the highest estimated coverage for the 4:3:1:3:3 series was 88.8 percent in Boston,

Massachusetts, and the lowest was 69.2 percent in Houston, Texas. The estimated coverage with the 4:3:1:3:3 series ranged from 94.0 percent in Connecticut to 67.5 percent in Colorado.

Texas results for 2003 indicate that the overall immunization rate for the state is 74.8 percent, Bexar County's rate is higher at 77.3, followed by El Paso County 77.2, Dallas County 70.2, and the City of Houston's rate is 69.2. Congratulations Bexar County immunizers, your hard work and dedication towards protecting the children of our community sets an example for your colleagues around the state to follow.

While these rates are encouraging there is more immunization work to do. "A substantial number of children in the United States still aren't adequately protected from vaccine-preventable diseases," said CDC Director Dr. Julie Gerberding. The complete 2003 National Immunization Survey data can be found in the CDC's Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) at the following address: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5329a3.htm>

Source: US Department of Health and Human Services Press Release July 29, 2004

Closing the Vaccination Gap

In August Trust for America's Health, a non-profit, non-partisan organization, in partnership with Every Child By Two released a report titled **Closing the Vaccination Gap**. The report discusses the importance of childhood immunizations, examines immunization rates, and recommends improvements to immunization programs, funding, and policies. The report calls on Congress to pass the Children's Vaccine Access Act of 2004 and makes additional recommendations towards improving immunization rates and programs across the nation. To access this comprehensive and timely report go to www.govexec.com/pdfs/TFAHImmunizationRpt.pdf

VFC Program Welcomes New Partners

The past 3 months have been busy months for the VFC Program as six new immunization partners joined the Vaccines For Children Program. The VFC staff would like to welcome **Reshmey Medical Clinic, Somerset Independent School District – Student Health Center, Centro Med – Walzem Clinic, South Texas Family AIDS Network, North San Antonio Healthcare Associates and Pinkston Family Practice – Shaenfield Rd.** Welcome aboard and feel free to contact Mario Martinez at 207-4015 or Elvia Ledezma at 207-2862 for any VFC questions you may have.

Quarterly Vaccine Deliveries

In an effort to streamline Vaccine Management responsibilities and more efficiently deliver vaccine, the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program began phasing in a quarterly vaccine delivery system in August. VFC vaccine will be ordered and delivered on a quarterly basis. VFC providers need to take into consideration seasonal fluctuations in vaccine demand (i.e. school physicals, flu vaccination season, etc.) when estimating quarterly vaccine needs. In the event that a provider runs out of vaccine before the next quarterly ordering period, the VFC Program will accommodate interim vaccine orders.

VFC providers with small refrigerators will be given consideration with the implementation of quarterly vaccine deliveries and will receive more frequent deliveries as necessary. Providers are receiving the quarterly vaccine delivery instructions and order forms during VFC vaccine deliveries. If providers have not yet received information regarding the quarterly delivery system the forms and instructions will be delivered with the next vaccine shipment. Order forms and other VFC forms can be downloaded from the SAMHD website at www.sanantonio.gov/health/Immunizations/VFC. For more information about vaccine ordering you can contact Anthony Johnson at 921-1178.

AFIX Visits Raise Immunization Coverage Levels

We are nearing the end of the year and immunization coverage levels are continuing to rise for VFC providers. Have you had your QA/AFIX visit? The Quality Assurance/AFIX (QA/AFIX) Team is still scheduling Quality Assurance/VFC site visits at Vaccines for Children (VFC) Provider locations throughout the area. The mission of conducting site visits is to ensure that enrolled VFC providers are immunizing patients according to Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidelines and adhering to VFC Program guidelines.

The QA/AFIX Team is always willing to assist you in arranging an appointment for a site visit to benefit your facility. Site visits provide valuable information to providers on their immunization practice patterns and immunization rates. Each visit is designed to help identify possible barriers to immunization that may result in low vaccination coverage or missed opportunities for immunization. The primary role of the QA/AFIX Team is to assist providers in finding practical solutions to immunization related dilemmas within their facilities. QA/AFIX is available to help you!!

The members of the QA/AFIX team would like to thank the following providers and their staffs for participating in the QA/AFIX site visit process during this past quarter:

Office of Dr. Ochoa, Southeast Baptist Hospital, Hill's Medical Clinic, Southwest Clinic, I.H.-10 De Zavala Road Family Clinic, Bandera Family Health Care, Pinkston Family Practice, PA, Valley Clinic, Office of Dr. Luna, Reshmey Medical Clinic, Leon Springs Pediatrics, Thousand Oaks Pediatrics, Office of Dr. Magged George, Alamo Pediatric Clinic, P.A., Stone Oak Pediatrics, Office of Dr. Al-Shalchi, Blanco Road Medical Clinic, Pediatric Medicine, P.A., All Star Pediatrics, University Physicians Group Diagnostic Pavillion, Trevino Family Clinic, South San Antonio Family Practice, Office of Dr. Montemayor, Clinica Medica Internacional, Office of Dr. Do (New Braunfels Street Office), Tejas Pediatrics, Office of Dr. Josephine Ruiz-Healy, University Center For Community Health, DeZavala Family Practice, Infants Shelter, Priority Pediatrics, University Family Health Center-North, Child Care Associates, South Alamo Medical Group Pediatric Clinic, Office of Dr. Cantu, San Antonio Pediatric Associates (Medical Center Office), School Based Health Center-East Central, Office of Dr. Cuming, Barrio Comprehensive Family Health Center (Barclay Street Office), Metropolitan Methodist Hospital, University Family Health Center-Southeast, Family Clinics of San Antonio, Northwest Pediatrics Associates, South San Antonio Medical Associates, San Antonio Pediatric Associates (Main Street Office), Office of Dr. Jalomo, Primary Care Associates, San Antonio Pediatric Associates (Houston Street Office), Gruesbeck-Cruz Medical Clinic, Office of Dr. Garcia (Judson Road Office), Toepperwein Family Practice, P.A., Office of Dr. Lira, Battered Women's Shelter/ La Paloma Centro Med, Alamo Heights Pediatrics, Health Texas Medical Group, Office of Dr. Karam, Office of Dr. Tamez, San Antonio Pediatric Associates (San Saba Street Office), Office of Dr. Tabet, Westlakes Primary Care, P.A., and the Office of Dr. Tenorio.

Congratulations are in order for the following providers that achieved outstanding immunization coverage rates during the past quarter: Office of Dr. Montemayor (**100%**), Stone Oak Pediatrics (**100%**), San Antonio Pediatric Associates-San Saba Office (**100%**), Barrio Comprehensive Family Health Center-Barclay Street Office (**100%**), University Family Health Center Southeast (**100%**), Northwest Pediatrics Associates (**96%**), San Antonio Pediatric Associates - Main Street Office (**95%**), Pediatric Medicine, P.A. (**95%**), Office of Dr. Jalomo (**94%**), Child Care Associates (**92%**), University Physicians Group Diagnostic Pavillion (**91%**), University Family Health Center-North (**90%**), All Star Pediatrics (**89%**), South Alamo Medical Group Pediatric Clinic (**88%**), Office of Dr. Josephine Ruiz-Healy (**88%**), Alamo Heights Pediatrics (**86%**), Trevino Family Clinic (**85%**), Office of Dr. Tabet (**83%**), Tejas Pediatrics (**82%**), Leon Springs Pediatrics (**82%**), Blanco Road Medical Clinic

(82%), and San Antonio Pediatric Associates (81%). These facilities worked proactively to ensure that over 80% of the children seen by their practices are up-to-date on their required immunizations of 4 DTaP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hib, and 3 Hep B by 24 months of age. All of these facilities invested substantial efforts towards improving children's immunization coverage levels within their practices. **JOB WELL DONE!!** Keep up the great work!!

Special congratulations go out to Stone Oak Pediatrics, Office of Dr. Montemayor, Barrio Comprehensive Family Health Center (Barclay Street Office), University Family Health Center Southeast, and San Antonio Pediatric Associates-San Saba Office. These facilities surpassed the National Immunization Program (NIP) goal of 90% immunization coverage for the 4:3:1:3:3 series, receiving a perfect score of 100%. In fact, this is the third consecutive year that Dr. Montemayor's office has received a perfect score! Immunizing on time is definitely a top priority for him and his staff. Impressive work!!



Dr. Montemayor and Staff



Stone Oak Pediatrics



Barrio Comprehensive Family Health Center-Barclay Street



University Family Health Center South East

We would like to once again Thank our VFC providers for their outstanding dedication and commitment toward immunizing on time and keeping the children in our community healthy. Your continued participation in our VFC Program is sincerely appreciated, we commend you all for the excellent work you do!!

VFC providers are encouraged to use the Clinical Assessment Software Application (CASA) to simplify keeping patient's immunization status up-to-date. The software is free of charge and the QA/AFIX staff is available to assist with training and installation. For more information or to schedule a site visit, please contact Kenya Wilson at 207-3974.

Back-to-School Immunization Drive 2004

With new state school entry requirements being strictly enforced by many school districts, the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) co-sponsored three Back-to-School (BTS) immunization clinics this year in order to help parents and students comply with these state regulations. Outreach sites for immunizations included: a Community Health Fair/BTS clinic at the SAMHD Southwest Branch clinic, the annual "Shots for Tots" BTS Immunization drive at Crossroads Mall, and a Community Health Fair/ BTS clinic at the NISD Paul Taylor Field House. These three clinics were sponsored and co-organized by Councilman Perez, KLRN TV/KISS99.5 /MAGIC105.3 radio, and Councilman Barrera respectively.

Two other special clinics were held by SAMHD at the Main Immunization downtown clinic. The main clinic was opened on both Saturday and Sunday allowing parents one final weekend to have their children immunized prior to the start of school. According to our records, 1,943 school-age children were immunized with 3,813 doses of vaccine at the five (5) combined SAMHD Outreach Back-to-School clinics.

In addition, the SAMHD would like to acknowledge and thank our Vaccines for Children (VFC) providers

for immunizing San Antonio's children throughout the year and especially just before school starts. Using vaccines supplied to them by the SAMHD, additional children were immunized demonstrating the excellent collaboration held by both parties. VFC providers assisted by holding their own BTS clinics at the Barrio Comprehensive & Ella Austin clinics, the Centro Med (South Park Medical) clinic and the University Health System. Of special note is the collaborative effort shown by Barrio Comprehensive in providing immunizations at the community event sponsored by Councilman Segovia at McCreless Mall. Using VFC vaccines supplied by SAMHD, Barrio stepped in to immunize when the SAMHD staff was already committed to other BTS clinics.

The SAMHD urges all health care providers to remind parents about the importance of keeping their children's immunizations up to date. This protects their children from vaccine preventable diseases and helps parents avoid long waits during the BTS season.

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District would like to thank all of our partners and sponsors who helped make 2004 such a successful BTS season! We especially want to thank the SAMHD STAFF who demonstrated that such an enormous undertaking is possible through teamwork and commitment!

2004 Immunization
Registry Conference



**Healthier Lives
Through Sharing Information**
Immunization Information Systems

The 5th Immunization Registry Conference, October 18 – October 20, will bring together over 450 local, state, federal, and private sector immunization registry partners, to promote knowledge and information about the development and use of immunization registries. The goal of the conference is to provide participants with programmatic, technical, and scientific information that will improve the use of immunization registries. The conference will also provide a forum to build support for immunization registries, enhance collaboration, promote multiple and innovative uses of registry data, explore alternative funding strategies, and demonstrate immunization registry successes.

The Immunization Division will be represented by Francisco Gonzalez and Jorge Reyes who will be presenting at the Immunization Registry Conference in Atlanta, GA. Mr. Gonzalez will present his abstract on, "Registry Anywhere: How Wireless Technology Enhanced the San Antonio Immunization Registry". The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District

(SAMHD) has operated the San Antonio Immunization Registry System (SAIRS) since 1980. In 2003, a new state vaccine requirement affected over 190,000 children in the Bexar County, Texas area. In response to the increased work load produced from back-to-school children and this new requirement, SAMHD held numerous special Immunization Outreach Events throughout San Antonio. The use of land lines to access the SAIRS in these remote sites was often not feasible. Innovative wireless telecommunication planning and coordination soon became the answer. Mr. Gonzalez's abstract details the success the SAMHD has had using wireless technologies.

Jorge Reyes's presentation will be on Technical Challenges and Innovations Relating to Immunization Information Systems. His abstract is "SAIRS to SAIRS II – Registry Migration in San Antonio Texas". The San Antonio Immunization Registry System (SAIRS) has resided on a Mainframe system for over twenty years. Although once a state-of-the-art system, the fully operational registry is slow, outdated and easily surpassed by newer, server-based systems. Functional limitations of the Mainframe include limited reporting, inadequate data de-duplication and the need for a third party to manage the system. In March 2004, the SAMHD's Immunization Division decided that the benefits presented by migrating to a more standardized, web-based registry system were too great and decided to migrate from a legacy mainframe system to a more robust and dynamic Microsoft SQL Server database. Mr. Reyes's presentation will reveal the challenges and solutions the Registry team encountered during this major transition. For more information on SAIRS II contact Walter Widish, MS at 207-8792.

Linkage Program Highlights

Since 1994, the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District's Immunization Division has utilized the Immunization WIC Linkage Program to provide and facilitate immunization services to children 0-2 years of age who are considered at high-risk for under immunization. These children frequently reside in hard to reach, socio-economically disadvantaged locations throughout San Antonio.

Through the efforts of the Immunization and WIC Divisions, the Linkage Program has been highly successful in raising awareness of the critical need for timely immunizations. The Linkage Program has found that the most effective strategy for accomplishing this goal is to provide immunization record assessments and reminder/referral calls to all WIC participants who are either due or behind on their immunizations and education.

With the on-going collaboration and support of the WIC Division, the WIC Linkage Program will continue to successfully reach WIC participants and improve the immunization status of this vulnerable population. For more information regarding the Immunization/WIC Linkage Program you can contact Adrianna Garza-Gongora, LBSW, MA at 207-2865.

Vaccine Studies & RSV Prevention

M-M-R II

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) will be collaborating with Merck and Company to conduct an MMR™ II research study. MMR™ II is a live virus vaccine indicated for simultaneous vaccination against measles, mumps and rubella. Currently in the United States, it's recommended to administer a dose of MMR at 12 to 15 months of age and a second dose at 4 to 6 years of age. This is a comparative study to evaluate the immunogenicity and safety in healthy children, 12 to 18 months of age who receive either M-M-R™II manufactured from the 2003 Measles Stock Seed versus M-M-R™II manufactured from the 1967 Measles Stock Seed. The subjects will also receive a single dose of Varicella.

The study involves two clinic visits and blood samples drawn at each visit. Parents/guardians will be asked to record temperatures and any vaccine reactions they feel represent a change in the health status of their child. Subjects participating in the study will be financially compensated and offered recommended immunizations free of charge. For more information, please contact Marcela Martinez at 207-3968.

DAPTACEL

The SAMHD is also collaborating with Aventis Pasteur to conduct the continuation of a previous clinical research study. The study is designed to assess the safety and immunogenicity of DAPTACEL® administered at 4 to 6 years of age according to the US standard of care. The study population will consists of subjects from the Aventis Pasteur study 494-03 who received 4 doses of Pentacel™. These children will receive DAPTACEL® as a 5th dose of DTaP between 4 to 6 years of age. A second dose of MMR and a fourth dose of Polio are recommended at 4 to 6 years of age and may be optionally co-administered with DAPTACEL®.

This study consists of a clinic visit and Parents/guardians will be asked to record any local or systemic vaccine reactions and any other adverse events that they feel represent a change in the health status of their child. Telephone contacts will be conducted on four specific dates and subjects in the study will be financially compensated and offered recommended immunizations free of charge. Contact Marcela Martinez at 207-3968 for study details.

Synagis

The SAMHD will conduct a program for the prevention of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) infections in infants and young children less than two years of age. RSV is a very common virus that causes mild cold-like symptoms during RSV season, October thru March. It can cause serious respiratory infections in young babies, especially those born prematurely, who have heart or lung disease, or who are immunocompromised. Each year up to 125,000 infants are hospitalized due to severe RSV disease and about 2,500 of these infants die.

Becoming infected with RSV does not establish immunity to the virus and children can become infected again. The drug Synagis® was developed to prevent these children from developing severe infections and complications. Synagis® is given by injection once a month through the RSV season by appointment for eligible children. It effectively prevents serious disease and reduces hospitalization due to RSV infection. If you would like additional information, or to refer your patients, please contact Marcela Martinez at 207-3968.

Immunization Division Contacts

Program Operations: Brenda Lemke, MHA	207-8794
CDC Public Health Advisor: Thomas Finke, MPA	207-2870
Clinical Operations: Linda B. Lopez, RN	207-8804
Hepatitis Program/Surveillance: Betty Vestal, RN, MSN	207-2087
Vaccines for Children Coordinator: Vivian B. Flores	207-2868
Vaccine Management: Anthony Johnson	921-1178
Immunization - WIC Linkage: Adrianna Garza-Gongora, LBSW, MA	207-2865
Consumer Education: Gloria Johnson, LVN	207-6917
Vaccine Studies: Marcela Martinez	207-3968
Registry/Info. Systems: Walter Widish, MS	207-8792
Adolescent/Adult/Influenza Program: Rita Salazar	207-8877
QA/AFIX Program: Kenya Wilson, MA	207-3974
Ed Ledbetter, MD, MPH Immunization Consultant	207-8806
Foreign Travel: Rebecca Prieto, RN	207-8872

Immunization Resource Sites

SAMHD: www.sanantonio.gov/health

TDH: www.tdh.state.tx.us

CDC: www.cdc.gov/nip

IAC: www.immunize.org

